

REMARKS

The present patent application now comprises thirty-seven (37) claims, numbered 4 to 19, 23 to 38 and 48 to 52.

Claims 4, 19, 23, 38, 48, 49 and 51 have been amended.

Claims 1 to 3, 20 to 22, 54 and 56 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 39 to 47, 53, 55 and 57 to 67 were previously cancelled.

No new matter has been added to the application by the present response.

1. Examiner's Comments regarding Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's comments on page 2 of the Office Action regarding potential allowability of claims 4 to 18 and 23 to 37.

2. Rejection of Claims 1 to 3, 19, 20 to 22, 48 to 52, 54 and 56 under 35 USC 103 and Response Thereto

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 to 3, 19, 20 to 22, 48 to 52, 54 and 56 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,067,391 to Land.

The Examiner indicated on page 2 of the Office Action that each of claims 4 and 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the elements of its base claim and any intervening claim.

As discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4 to 19, 23 to 38 and 48 to 52, as amended, are in condition for allowance.

Claims 4 to 19 and 49 to 52

Claim 4 has been amended to be in independent form including all of the elements of claims 1 to 3, which are now cancelled. In view of the Examiner's comments regarding potential allowability of claim 4, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4 is in condition for allowance.

Each of claim 5 to 19 and 49 to 52 depends on claim 4 and therefore incorporates by reference all of the elements of claim 4. Thus, for the same reasons as those set forth above in respect of claim 4, it is respectfully submitted that claims 5 to 19 and 49 to 52 are also in condition for allowance.

Claims 23 to 38

Claim 23 has been amended to be in independent form including all of the elements of claims 20 to 22, which are now cancelled. In view of the Examiner's comments regarding potential allowability of claim 23, it is respectfully submitted that claim 23 is in condition for allowance.

Each of claim 24 to 38 depends on claim 23 and therefore incorporates by reference all of the elements of claim 23. Thus, for the same reasons as those set forth above in respect of claim 23, it is respectfully submitted that claims 24 to 38 are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 48

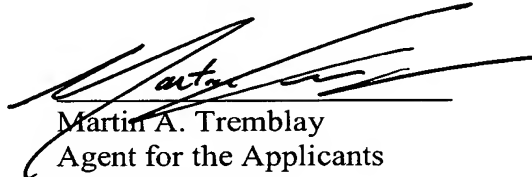
Claim 48 has been amended to include elements mirroring those of claims 21 to 23 as they stood prior to the present response. In view of the Examiner's comments regarding potential allowability of claim 23, it is respectfully submitted that claim 48 is in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Claims 4 to 19, 23 to 38 and 48 to 52 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favourable reconsideration is requested. Early allowance of the present patent application is earnestly solicited.

If the application is not considered to be in full condition for allowance, for any reason, the Applicants respectfully request the constructive assistance and suggestions of the Examiner in drafting one or more acceptable claims pursuant to MPEP 707.07(j) or in making constructive suggestions pursuant to MPEP 706.03 so that the application can be placed in allowable condition as soon as possible and without the need for further proceedings.

Respectfully submitted,



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